

Claims

1. A cooker apparatus including:
- a drum;
- 5 - one or more food receiving pockets associated with the drum, said pockets being configured for cooking food product in a heating liquid, which pockets have at least one open end;
- cover means for covering at least one open end of said pockets; and
 - rotation means for rotatably mounting said drum and pockets to a housing such
- 10 that said drum is rotatable with respect to said housing about a horizontal axis; and
- at least one lever to partially rotate the said drum and pockets about the axis to displace the pockets between an upwardly directed inclined position and a downwardly directed inclined position.
- 15 2. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pockets include a tube with a cylindrical body with walls including a plurality of perforations at a lower portion thereof, which lower portion defines an integral food pocket for releasably holding the food.
- 20 3. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the dimensions of the pocket at its open end corresponds with the dimensions of a cooked food container so that when the container is releasably positioned and snugly fitted over the open end of the said pocket, cooked food products are discharged from the food pocket into the container for serving purposes.
- 25 4. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the drums include locking means to prevent unauthorized use thereof and a counter device for measuring the amount of portions fried or cooked, said counter device correlating the number of times the drum was rotationally displaced about its rotational axis through
- 30 a predetermined arc.
5. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, the apparatus including immersing means for immersing and withdrawing at least the pockets into a
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receptacle of the heat transfer fluid.

6. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the immersing means is incorporated in the rotation means.

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7. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the immersion means includes a displacement mechanism for displacing the pockets, the displacement mechanism including a pivot arm fixed to the drum.

10 8. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7, including at least one heating means in the form of a helical coil positioned in the receptacle of the heat transfer fluid.

15 9. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 8, including a housing in which the heat transfer fluid receptacle is housed wherein the heat transfer fluid receptacle is positioned at such a location in the housing that the perforated portion of the pockets is immersed in the heat transfer fluid when the drum is partially rotationally displaced by a predetermined extent.

20 10. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9, wherein the heat transfer receptacle includes a sludge outlet in order to facilitate the removal of food debris thereby prolonging the useful life of the heat transfer fluid

25 11. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, including vibrating means provided for vibrating the pockets in order to shake off free cooking liquid from food products and/or the pockets after the frying or cooking process has been completed.

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12. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 11, including a guide for guiding the food debris towards a cold zone of the heat transfer fluid in the receptacle.
13. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the guide includes a separation device which prevents the free movement of the food debris through the heat transfer fluid and guides the food debris away from heating elements towards a drain portion of the apparatus.
14. A cooker apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the separation device is a sheet having a portion located within the heat transfer fluid and at least partially screening the heating elements from the food debris.
15. A cooker apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, including a condenser system which includes an air pump which blows air into the housing adjacent where the cooking is taking place and forces the hot air into the outlet pipes and then into a condenser tank where condensed gasses are collected and non-condensibles are directed back to the pump after passing through a filter system thereby reducing the necessity for a canopy extractor system.
16. A vending machine incorporating an apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims.